

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO OFFER RESOLUTION RAISING A QUES- TION OF THE PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 2(a)(1) of rule IX, I hereby notify the House of my intention to offer a resolution as a question of the privileges of the House.

The form of my resolution is as follows:

Whereas, The Hill reported that a prominent lobbying firm specializing in obtaining defense earmarks for its clients, the subject of a "federal investigation into potentially corrupt political contributions," has given \$3.4 million in political donations to no less than 284 Members of Congress.

Whereas, multiple press reports have noted questions related to campaign contributions made by or on behalf of the firm; including questions related to "straw man" contributions, the reimbursement of employees for political giving, pressure on clients to give, a suspicious pattern of giving, and the timing of donations relative to legislative activity.

Whereas, Roll Call has taken note of the timing of contributions from employees of the firm and its clients when it reported that they "have provided thousands of dollars worth of campaign contributions to key Members in close proximity to legislative activity, such as the deadline for earmark request letters or passage of a spending bill."

Whereas, CQ Today specifically noted a Member getting "\$25,000 in campaign contribution money from [the founder of the firm] and his relatives right after his subcommittee approved its spending bill in 2005."

Whereas, the Associated Press also noted that Members received campaign contributions from employees of the firm "around the time they requested" earmarks for companies represented by the firm.

Whereas, clients of the firm received at least \$300 million worth of earmarks in fiscal year 2009 appropriations legislation, including several that were approved even after news of the FBI raid of the firm's offices and Justice Department investigation into the firm was well known.

Whereas, the persistent media attention focused on questions about the nature and timing of campaign contributions related to the firm, as well as reports of the Justice Department conducting research on earmarks and campaign contributions, raise concern about the integrity of Congressional proceedings and the dignity of this institution.

Now, therefore, be it *Resolved*, That

(a) the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, or a subcommittee of the committee designated by the committee and its members appointed by the chairman and ranking member, shall immediately begin an investigation into the relationship between the source and timing of past contributions to Members of the House related to the raided firm and earmark requests made by Members of the House on behalf of clients of the raided firm.

(b) The Committee on Standards of Official Conduct shall submit a report of its findings to the House of Representatives within 2 months after the date of adoption of this resolution.

THE SPEAKER pro tempore. Under rule IX, a resolution offered from the floor by a Member other than the majority leader or the minority leader as a question of the privileges of the House has immediate precedence only at a time designated by the Chair within 2 legislative days after the resolution is properly noticed.

Pending that designation, the form of the resolution noticed by the gentleman from Arizona will appear in the RECORD at this point.

The Chair will not at this point determine whether the resolution constitutes a question of privilege. That determination will be made at the time designated for consideration of the resolution.

THE ADMINISTRATION ISN'T PROTECTING AMERICANS' JOBS

(Mr. SMITH of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in 2006, Senator Obama told his colleagues, "We need an electronic verification system that can significantly reduce the employment of illegal workers, and give employers the confidence that their workforce is legal."

E-Verify is the voluntary Federal program that does just that by allowing employers to check the employment eligibility of their newly hired employees. Yet the Democrats have blocked every single attempt made so far this year to enact a long-term extension of E-Verify.

Instead of protecting jobs for U.S. citizens and legal workers, President Obama signed a bill that will provide 300,000 jobs to illegal immigrants in just the construction industry alone.

With 12 million Americans out of work, we should save jobs for American workers and legal immigrants, not give jobs to illegal workers.

ECONOMIC 9/11

(Mr. COHEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend our President, the administration, for the bold action they took today to help resolve our economic morass that we are expressing because of the past administration and the lack of regulations by this Congress. The stock market responded positively with a 500-point gain.

I think it's important that people recognize the good that the administration is doing and trying to do, that we need to work together as a team, as Americans.

After 9/11, Republicans and Democrats came together to support the President and support us in a great crisis. This is an economic 9/11. People should support the President and not do critical things.

Some of them have even suggested, oh, he had time to fill out his NCAA bracket, where he correctly had the Memphis Tigers going to the Sweet Sixteen. There's nothing wrong with that. President Obama is good on the Sweet Sixteen, and he's good on the economy.

COMMENDING KEVIN PETERSEN

(Mr. MCCARTHY of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career of a committed public servant, Kevin Petersen, who retires April 3, 2009, as director of NASA's Dryden Flight Research Center located in my district. Kevin has served at Dryden for 38 years and is currently NASA's longest-serving field center director.

Kevin began his career at Dryden as a university cooperative student in 1971, was hired as an aerospace engineer when he graduated from Iowa State in 1974, and later received a Master of Science degree from UCLA.

Kevin was appointed to be Dryden's director in 1999. His tenure as director has seen Dryden's focus on aeronautics research expand to also support work in environmental and space science, space exploration, and human spaceflight. Currently, Dryden has the important task of testing the new Orion Launch Abort System. I appreciated Kevin showing me around that key program when I visited.

Kevin Petersen is a role model for all American students considering a career in science, technology, engineering or mathematics. Kevin, you've been a great public servant. I appreciate your dedication, and I wish you the best of luck.

CHIEF MARK McCURRY: FIRE CHIEF OF THE YEAR

(Mr. MCHENRY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Fire Chief Mark McCurry of Forest City, North Carolina. Chief McCurry was recently named Fire Chief of the Year by the North Carolina Association of Fire Chiefs. It is their highest honor.

Thirty-five years ago, Mark's uncle encouraged him to go into the family business of fire service. Now, 35 years later, Chief McCurry is still serving the community of Forest City. He says putting his life on the line to protect those of his fellow citizens is "like a calling."

Chief McCurry understands that his men no longer just put out fires. All Forest City firemen are now certified EMTs and trained to deal with hazardous materials and weather emergencies.

Mark McCurry recently said, "It takes a crazy person to run into a building that everyone else is running out of." I think we all agree, but no, Chief, it takes an extraordinarily brave man to run into a burning building. And this year, your peers have recognized you as the bravest of all. Congratulations.

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SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

EARLY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, this week I will be introducing the EARLY Act: The Breast Cancer Education and Awareness Requires Learning Young Act of 2009. The EARLY Act is designed to empower young women to learn the facts, know their bodies, speak up for their health, and embrace support.

Despite the perception, young women can and do get breast cancer. More than 10,000 women under 40 are diagnosed with breast cancer every year in the United States. Although the incidence of breast cancer in young women is much lower, young women's breast cancers are generally more aggressive, are diagnosed at a later stage, and result in lower survival rates.

Additionally, certain ethnic groups, including Ashkenazi Jews and African American young women, have an increased risk of breast cancer.

I became acutely aware of all of this information, and more, a little more than a year ago. After finding a lump in my breast while doing my routine breast self-exam in the shower, I learned a few weeks later from my doctor that I had breast cancer.

Upon learning of my diagnosis and after genetic counseling, I also decided to have a blood test that would show whether I had a genetic mutation in the BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene. As a woman of Ashkenazi Jewish descent, I was in a category of at-risk populations for these gene mutations. The test results showed that I did indeed carry the BRCA2 genetic marker that suggests a greater susceptibility to breast and ovarian cancers.

After further consultation with my doctors and my husband, I decided to have a double mastectomy and have my ovaries removed to reduce the likelihood of a recurrence of cancer. Today, with a clean bill of health and cancer-free, I plan to introduce the EARLY Act.

The EARLY Act encourages young women to be familiar with the look and feel of their breasts. By knowing what feels normal, a young woman has a better chance of knowing when something feels different.

The EARLY Act will also work to educate young women about changes in their body that could be warning signs of breast cancer. We want them to know that it doesn't only start with a lump. It can be swelling, a rash, breast pain, nipple pain, redness or scaliness, too.

The EARLY Act will encourage young women to be their own voice—to speak up for themselves and know when they need to go to their doctor.

The EARLY Act will teach both young women and medical professionals alike about risk factors, warning signs of breast cancer, and predictive tools such as genetic testing, that can help women make informed decisions about their health.

It will also provide grants to organizations dedicated to supporting young women and the unique issues we face when diagnosed with breast cancer, as well as managing and understanding their risks.

Today, we often fail to teach about risk in this country. As a result, many of us face serious consequences in our lives. We need to change the educational dialogue and empower not only young women, but everyone to take control of the risks they face. And that begins with education and awareness.

I thought I knew all of my personal risk factors for breast cancer. Because of those risk factors, I performed self-exams, went to my doctor regularly, and have been a longtime legislative advocate in the fight against breast cancer. But when I was diagnosed, I found out I had more risk factors than I was aware of.

For example, I had absolutely no idea that as an Ashkenazi Jewish woman, I was five times more likely than the general population to have an altered BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene, or what the risks of carrying that gene entailed.

This bill will give all young women the tools they need to take control of the risks by teaching awareness of their personal risks and what they can do to manage those risks.

At the end of the day, the old saying rings true: Knowledge is power. By making sure young women know their risk factors, the EARLY Act is the first step in transforming how we approach the fight against breast cancer.

In hearing my story, some people might say I was lucky. While I was certainly fortunate enough to have access to good health care, I didn't find my tumor early because of luck. I found my tumor early because of knowledge and awareness. I knew I should perform breast self-exams, and I was aware of what my body was supposed to feel like.

It is my hope that by sharing my story we will pass the Breast Cancer Education and Awareness Requires Learning Young Act of 2009 into law this year and further reduce the death rate of young women diagnosed with breast cancer.

We need to ensure that every young woman in America can rely on more than just luck. Their survival depends on it.

I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this vital legislation. Thank you very much.

HONORING AN AMERICAN ANIMAL-LOVING CHAMPION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, my family and I have always been pet lovers. In fact, we have always been owned by at least one cat and one dog. We support many animal rescue organizations. The current dog and cat we have are both rescue pets. However, we cannot hold a candle to a person whose life has been dedicated to saving animals.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of a great American, a woman with a passion for the humane treatment of animals, my friend, Gertrude Maxwell. Gertrude Maxwell is the founder, past president, and lifetime chairman of Save-A-Pet of Illinois, which she founded more than 35 years ago. Later, she founded and served as president of Save-A-Pet of Florida. Then, 15 years ago, she started the National Save-a-Pet Foundation, where she currently serves as director and chairman.

Her Save-A-Pet organization exists for one reason—saving animals. It is a nonprofit group dedicated to saving abandoned, homeless, or lost pets, and is committed to shielding pets from the practice of animal euthanasia.

Gertrude is a champion of abandoned and unwanted pets and, as a fellow animal lover, I am inspired by her pioneering work with Save-A-Pet. When she discovered in 1972 that more than 90,000 pets were destroyed every month in the United States, she set about the work of shrinking and hopefully one day eliminating the number of pets euthanized in America.

Throughout her lifetime of work on behalf of animals, Gertrude has established and maintained many animal hospitals and adoption centers. Thanks to her unwavering commitment to saving pets, her work has directly saved nearly 100,000 pets over the course of her decades-long campaign on behalf of animals.

After more than 35 years of advocacy for animals, she is still working for the humane treatment of animals. Her tireless efforts also find her lobbying for laws to aid animal welfare, and recently bore fruit when the Save-A-Pet Act was signed into law in Florida last spring.

This legislation creates what is known as a Direct Support Organization that will raise funds from individuals, corporations, and small businesses to provide grants to animal shelters in emergency situations. This organization will provide for spaying and neutering of abandoned cats and dogs, reduce the need for euthanasia of animals, and reduce animal cruelty.

The Save-A-Pet Act was widely supported by Governor Charlie Crist and organizations like the Florida Veterinary Medical Association; the Florida Association of Kennel Clubs; the Florida Animal Control Association, and the National Rifle Association.